



Press Release Debate in PACE on Islamophobia

Strasbourg, 23 June 2010

Today, we are going through a period where dissemination of hatred and xenophobia are in high progresses in many countries in Europe. Discussions at European level about cultural diversity and place of other faiths, mainly Muslims who are increasingly stigmatized raises the question of our social cohesion. We note again that the election periods become conducive to comments or speeches flirting with the unacceptable in terms of our fundamental rights and freedoms.

The amalgam mixing problems of employment, ghettoization, youth, place of religion in our common space, which target Muslim community by naming it as responsible for part of the policy mistakes of the past 30 years have no place in Europe.

All this rhetoric which are very similar to the anti-Semitic imagery used during the 1930 and 1940 do not augur for better times and raise the question of our security and our peace. Muslim communities have been an integral part of European history for ages and are an important part of modern European societies, contributing to its cultural, social, economic and political well-being.

This society is now riddled by hate speech and the open rise of anti-Muslim hatred and its political affirmation which challenge all the achievements of the Second World War disaster.

We call each of the political actors to challenge the messages broadcast towards the public and to avoid situations of slippage that are facilitated by audiences vulnerable and open to extremism. Our commitment to live together while respecting the most basic rules of our modern Democracies is the assurance of our willingness to discuss and struggling against inequality and exclusion, which moves in direction of a portion of our citizens.

Therefore, we observe with concern how the debate today in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe is approached. Under the title Islam, Islamism and Islamophobia, once again we see the existence of the dangerous links between terms that can lend to confusion. Therefore, we call on parliamentarians and stakeholders who take part in this debate to consider the three terms which are covering different issues. The real debate is that of direct threats against one of the cultural component of European society. Today, we need to resolve the crucial question; European Muslims live a hard attack against their fundamental rights and human freedoms. This is unacceptable.

Contact : Veysel FILIZ +336.89.84.52.27